



## Kentucky Department of Agriculture News

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# COMMISSIONER FARMER: BUY KENTUCKY PROUD FOR FRESH FOOD YOU CAN SERVE WITH CONFIDENCE

FRANKFORT, Ky. — The recent salmonella scare points up the benefits of buying locally produced Kentucky Proud food, Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer said.

The FDA has tied raw red plum, raw red Roma and raw round red tomatoes to 167 cases of salmonellosis reported since mid-April. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has advised the American public to consume tomatoes only from 23 states, part of Florida, Puerto Rico and six foreign countries or tomato varieties that FDA's evidence suggests are not the source of the outbreak.

"The FDA has confirmed that home-grown tomatoes are not considered part of the salmonella outbreak," Commissioner Farmer said. "When you buy Kentucky Proud tomatoes or corn or any other fresh food product this summer, you know you're getting products that were grown with care and harvested just recently. You can serve Kentucky Proud fruits and vegetables with confidence that they will be good for your family. Many value-added Kentucky Proud foods, like salsas, use raw products that were raised right here at home."

Kentucky's 120 farmers' markets are excellent sources of locally grown fruits and vegetables, said Janet Eaton, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's farmers' market coordinator. Some markets sell products that are trucked in from distant locations, so Eaton advises consumers to ask vendors whether their food is home-grown and look for the Kentucky Proud logo.

Last year the state and the University of Kentucky launched the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) program to educate fruit and vegetable growers and processors on best practices for growing, transporting and handling produce to minimize the risk of food contamination. Since the program started, 855 Kentucky producers have been trained on GAP principles.

Tomatoes generally are available from early July to mid-October in Kentucky. Sweet corn is available from early July to early October. For a chart of fruit and vegetable availability in Kentucky, go to [www.kyagr.com/kyproud/kyproud\\_001.htm](http://www.kyagr.com/kyproud/kyproud_001.htm).

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